

Outlook Special Edition, August 2006 Crisis in Middle East



**Statement by
Ann Veneman,
UNICEF Executive Director**

The attacks that took place in Qana are dramatic evidence that children are once again paying the price of war. We strongly condemn the continued targeting of civilians, particularly children. We urge all parties to heed the call of

Secretary-General Annan for an immediate cessation of hostilities. We urgently need the establishment of clear arrangements for full access and safe conduct of humanitarian relief operations to:

- Relocate the children, the wounded, the disabled, and the elderly who have not been able to escape the fighting in the worst war zones.
- Re-supply hospitals and health centres, particularly in the South, with emergency medical relief items and fuel for generators to avoid a complete breakdown of public health facilities caring for the thousands of wounded.
- Provide water and sanitation facilities, food, and other basic supplies to the tens of thousands of displaced who are seeking shelter in public buildings in the conflict zones.
- Establish an emergency communication system to vulnerable communities allowing us to address acute needs urgently where and when they arise.

Background information:

The Government of Lebanon estimates that 987 people have been killed and more than 3,408 injured in Lebanon alone. While the situation is changing daily, UNICEF believes that more than one-third of the people affected are children.

An estimated 915,000 people are reportedly internally displaced, with an estimated 130,762 people living in 652 schools and public gardens in and around Beirut. An estimated 45 per cent of the internally displaced (IDPs) are children.

**Statement by Mr. Dan Rohrmann,
UNICEF Special Representative in occupied
Palestinian territory**

As the international media is focused on the humanitarian disaster unfolding in Lebanon, sadly enough the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is on the

verge of being forgotten. For the 1.44 million Palestinians living in Gaza, out of which 838,000 are children, the humanitarian situation is a daily reality.

Having just returned from Gaza it is clear that children are living in an environment of extraordinary violence, fear and anxiety. Over the last month, some 35 Palestinian children were killed in Gaza almost a quarter of whom were less than 10 years old. This figure brings the total number of Palestinian children killed this year due to the conflict in West Bank and Gaza to 65 children. These figures are the second highest since the beginning of the current crisis in September 2000. This year one Israeli child was killed bringing the total to 66 children. Since the beginning of the Intifada, the total number of children killed is 912, out of which 119 are Israeli children.

Given the humanitarian crisis in Gaza UNICEF is stepping up its support in health, education, water and sanitation, psychosocial counselling, and activities for adolescents and younger children.

UNICEF reminds all parties that all children have rights, including those to health, water, education and protection. These rights must be safeguarded irrespective of the environment they happen to live in. Protection of civilians including children, as per the 4th Geneva Convention, is an obligation under International humanitarian law.



Three-year-old Aya recovers at the Rafiq Hariri Hospital in Beirut, after being wounded when a bomb hit the building she and her family were in.
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UNICEF appeals for \$25.2 million as part of flash appeal for Middle East crisis

UNICEF has launched an appeal for \$25.2 million to support children caught in the crisis in Lebanon and

Syria. The appeal is part of the overall UN flash appeal for \$ 150 million.

UNICEF will work with its UN partners, the Red Cross, Red Crescent and others to provide rapid support for displaced or refugee children and families who are in urgent need of medical care, clean water and proper sanitation as well as help to deal with traumatic events.

Since the start of the crisis in Lebanon, UNICEF has provided:

- Essential drugs (including ORS & lice treatment) reaching 50,000
- 48 Water Tanks with a 5,000 litres capacity, to the Beirut, Aley and Chouf areas; Beneficiaries reached: 23,347 persons.
- 60,000 litres of bottled water to communities in south Lebanon.
- 337 water kits (containing collapsible containers, purification tablets and other items) throughout Beirut, Mount Lebanon, the South, North, and Bekaa; IDPs reached: 78,000.
- 3,150 boxes of water purification tablets to Beirut and the South; IDPs reached: 63,000
- 26,396 bags/bars of soap to Beirut, Mount Lebanon, the South, North, Bekaa; IDPs reached: 101,000
- 263,000 diapers to Beirut, Mount Lebanon, the South, North, and Bekaa; IDPs reached: 88,000.
- 180 recreation kits containing footballs and other games equipment. Children reached: 16,200

Over the next three months, UNICEF and its partners in Lebanon and Syria will:

- Provide clean water and sanitation facilities in schools;
- Provide emergency health kits with essential medicines for health centres and for the displaced;
- Monitor and support children who have experienced traumatic events;
- Prevent the separation of children from their families and re-unite families that have been separated;
- Provide recreation kits for distribution in 50 schools.

UNICEF Iran and Lebanon - How you can help

UNICEF Iran would like to express its solidarity to the women and children of Lebanon. The UNICEF Staff Association has collected funds from members of staff and from other UN agencies based in Iran for the crisis in Lebanon. The money raised will go towards helping provide support for displaced or refugee children and families.

UNICEF Iran has also offered staff to help in the crisis, including those who specialise in psycho-social care.

Out of the \$25.2 million requested in the UN Joint Appeal, only 27% has been received. Therefore, we are asking Iranians to support the children caught up

in the crisis in Lebanon, as well as any international that is living in Iran. Please make a cash donation to the bank below, and then send us the receipt, with the words "For Lebanon" written on it to the UNICEF office in Tehran.

Melli Bank

Account # 5005 (UNICEF), Eskan Branch, Tehran
(payable in all Melli Banks)



One year old Yasmin sleeps on a mattress in a school in Beirut. All 13 members of her family are displaced, having fled their homes to escape bombardment.
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Corridors of tranquility on the road to ceasefire

The death, destruction and suffering in Lebanon is horrifying and still escalating. With a million people already affected, at least a third children, emergency help and other support is urgently needed. Such action requires cease fire – yet we are constantly told that any ceasefire must wait until conditions are right – with the appropriate conditions defined solely in terms of military tactics, not human needs.

It was not always so. In Lebanon in 1987, in the midst of bloody conflict, "days of tranquillity" were negotiated by UNICEF for four days in three successive months to enable all children to be immunised. Water mains were repaired and damaged pumping stations put back in operation made possible by "hours of tranquillity" so the work could go on.

Why must we wait today? Europe and the US – indeed also Israel – should agree to support corridors of tranquillity and days of ceasefire, during which supplies to meet the most urgent needs of civilians, especially children, can be delivered.

A new middle east depends on the children and youth, both Lebanese and Palestinian who can see some of the fruits of peace, not just the hatreds of war. If the Governments delay working for a ceasefire now, even if only for a week, many, many more children will die and even more be maimed for life. What new Middle East can there be then? A ceasefire is needed immediately.

By Vanessa Redgrave, UNICEF Special Representative since 1993
Robert Smith, Executive Director UNICEF-UK 1980- 1999
Sir Richard Jolly, Deputy Executive Director UNICEF 1982-1995
Terry Waite CBE, former hostage in Beirut